

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN  
SOUTHERN DIVISION

RICKEY BILLS,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No. 15-cv-11414  
Hon. Matthew F. Leitman

PAUL KLEE, *et al.*

Defendant.

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**ORDER (1) CONDITIONALLY APPOINTING COUNSEL AND**  
**(2) STAYING CASE FOR PERIOD OF 120 DAYS**

Plaintiff Rickey Bills is a state inmate in the custody of the Michigan Department of Corrections (the “MDOC”). In this prisoner civil-rights action, Bills alleges that certain employees of the MDOC violated his constitutional rights. More specifically, Bills claims that Defendants Renee Diver and Vaughn Stewart intentionally interfered with his access to the courts. The case is now ready for trial. (*See* Certificate of Completion, ECF No. 127.)

Unlike criminal cases, there is no constitutional or statutory right to the appointment of counsel in civil cases. See *Lavado v. Keohane*, 992 F.2d 601, 605-606 (6th Cir. 1993). However, this district has a procedure in which cases are referred to a *Pro Bono* Committee that requests members of the bar to assist in

appropriate cases. This Court believes that Bills would benefit from the assistance of appointed *pro bono* counsel for the purposes of assisting him at trial.

Accordingly, this case is **REFERRED** to the *Pro Bono* Committee. Bills is conditionally granted appointment of counsel provided that the committee is successful in enlisting *pro bono* counsel. The Court will also **STAY** this action for a period of **120 days** while the committee attempts to obtain *pro bono* counsel. If *pro bono* counsel is not obtained within 120 days, the stay will be lifted, counsel will not be appointed, and Bills will need to proceed *pro se* at trial if he cannot retain counsel at his own expense.

Upon the completion of the *Pro Bono* Committee's efforts to find trial counsel for Bills, the Court will promptly set a status conference with all parties to set a mutually convenient trial date.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

s/Matthew F. Leitman  
MATTHEW F. LEITMAN  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Dated: July 6, 2023

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing document was served upon the parties and/or counsel of record on July 6, 2023, by electronic means and/or ordinary mail.

s/Holly A. Ryan  
Case Manager  
(313) 234-5126